

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9849

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VE, GY

SUBJECT: AMERICAN CITIZENS IN GUYANA SETTLED NEAR VENEZUELAN BORDER

REF: ARA/NC (DEVINE) MEMCONS OF MAY 21 AND MAY 29; GEORGETOWN 0931

1. IN RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY CARACAS INTEREST, POST HAS DEVELOPED FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON TWO GROUPS OF U.S. CITIZENS, PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL MISSION AND SHALOM COOPERATIVE, WHICH HAVE SETTLED IN GUYANA NEAR VENEZUELAN BORDER.

2. PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL MISSION: THIS MULTI-RACIAL GROUP CONSISTS OF NINE AMERICANS WHO OPERATE AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENT THREE MILES FROM PORT KAITUMA IN NORTHWEST DISTRICT OF GUYANA, APPROXIMATELY TWENTY-FIVE MILES FROM VENEZUELAN BORDER. LINKED WITH PEOPLE'S TEMPLE OF DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, CALIFORNIA BASED RELIGIOUS GROUP, PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL MISSION APPEARS WELL ORGANIZED AND FINANCED AND HAS LEASING ARRANGEMENT WITH GOG. THEY HAVE RECENTLY PURCHASED TRAWLER FROM U.S. SHRIMPING COMPANY AND EXPECT TO SUPPLEMENT AGRICULTURAL WORK WITH FISHING. MEMBERS OF PEOPLE'S TEMPLE ARE FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY AND HAVE TOLD CONSULAR OFFICERS THAT THEY EXPECT ADDITIONAL TWENTY TO TWENTY-FIVE SETTLERS IN NEXT TWO MONTHS. THEY DECLINE TO SPECULATE ON EVENTUAL SIZE, BUT POINT OUT THAT SPONSORING CHURCHES IN CALIFORNIA HAVE APPROXIMATE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF 10,000,; OF WHICH ONLY SMALL ELEMENT WOULD BE POTENTIAL SETTLERS HERE.

3. SHALOM COOPERATIVE; THIS GROUP, ALSO MULTI-RACIAL, IS LOCATED
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APPROXIMATELY EIGHT MILES FROM PORT KAITUMA AND CONSISTS OF TWENTY-

SIX AMERICANS. IN CONTRAST WITH FIRST GROUP, THEY ARE INEXPERIENCED

,
POORLY ORGANIZED, LACK FIRM LEASING ARRANGEMENT WITH GOG, AND
RECENTLY HAVE EXHAUSTED THEIR FINANCIAL RESOURCES. COOPERATIVE
APPEARS TO BE SPLITTING UP AND ONE MEMBER HAS ASKED FOR REPATRIA-
TION TO U.S. (REFTEL)). IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY CONOFF, ONE
GROUP MEMBER SAID THERE ARE NO RPT NO THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS
INVOLVED IN COOPERATIVE.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES THESE ARE ONLY GROUPS OF AMERICANS SETTLED
NEAR VENEZUELAN BORDER. WE PERCEIVE NO RPT NO THREAT TO VENEZUELAN
SECURITY IN THEIR ACTIVITIES NOR IS THERE EVIDENCE THEY ARE INVOLVED
IN GUYANESE POLITICS.

4. INDIRECTLY RELATED MATTER OF POSSIBLE INTEREST IS REPORT FROM
VISITING JOURNALIST THAT KIT NASCIMENTO, MINISTER OF STATE IN
OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER, TOLD HIM GROUP FROM VENEZUELAN
MOVIMIENTO AL SOCIALISMO (MAS) VISITED GUYANA PRIOR TO VENEZUELAN
ELECTIONS LAST YEAR IN UNSUCCESSFUL (AND UNREALISTIC) BID TO
OBTAIN POLITICAL ASSISTANCE. KREBS

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